

Number: WG30911



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation Document

Supporting People Programme Guidance and Outcome Framework Consultation

Date of issue: 15th May 2017
Action required: 4th August 2017

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Overview	This consultation is to gather views on the draft Supporting People Programme Guidance and the draft Outcome Framework.
How to respond	<p>Please respond by completing the questionnaires at the back of the relevant sections and sending it to SupportingPeople@Wales.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Supporting People Team Housing Policy Welsh Government Rhydycar Business Park Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1UZ</p>
Further information and related documents	Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.
Contact details	<p>For further information:</p> <p>Supporting People Team Housing Policy Welsh Government Rhydycar Business Park Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1UZ</p> <p>email: Supportingpeople@Wales.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>telephone: 0300 062 8467/0300 062 8204</p>

Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

CONTENTS

Summary	Page 5
Supporting People Programme Guidance	Page 6
Response for Guidance questions	Page 52
Supporting People Outcome Framework	Page 55
Response for Outcome questions	Page 63
Appendix 1	Page 69

Foreword

The Welsh Government's Supporting People Programme began in 2003 and provides housing related support to vulnerable people to live as independently as possible. The existing Guidance *Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG, Guidance – Wales (June 2013))* but has required a refresh to reflect changes to Welsh Government policy and legislation. Housing sector stakeholders have been instrumental in developing the new Guidance along with Welsh Government. The document provides strategic direction for the Programme, contributes to the Welsh Government's Programme for Governance: Taking Wales Forward, particularly encouraging links with health and boosting economic growth, in line with the needs of the individual.

Summary

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the revised *Supporting People Programme Grant Guidance* and the *Outcomes Framework* which have been produced by the Welsh Government in partnership with external stakeholders.

The Supporting People Programme helps vulnerable people to live independently in their own home or supported housing. In 2012 the current programme was rolled out following the merger of two separate grants into the Supporting People Programme Grant. Guidance was developed to assist people to understand the programme, and take a structured approach to developing and commissioning services.

As the programme continues to develop going forward it is now appropriate to revisit the initial Guidance and ensure it enables local authorities, who administer the funding to providers, to continue to provide services which are suitable for the needs of the vulnerable people it seeks to support. Additionally there have been substantial legislative changes in Wales including the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. These changes have increased the focus on early prevention and individuals receiving the right service at the right time and having more of a say in the way in which they receive support.

Alongside the development of the Guidance it is also timely to consider the Outcome Framework which helps to underpin the evidence of the impact of the programme. The current Framework was put in place in 2012 and work has been undertaken to strengthen this since that time. However it is now also appropriate to revisit the framework, and to have a stronger focus on a smaller number of outcomes which better reflect the purpose of the programme as well as the needs of the individuals receiving support, as well as helping to make it more relevant for them.

As the Guidance and the outcomes are linked as part of the governance of the programme a decision has been made to run one consultation with two elements and stakeholders are encouraged to respond to both elements where appropriate.

Your views on the draft Guidance and the outcomes framework are welcome and a response form is provided at the back of each document.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Supporting People Programme

Practice Guidance
2017

August 2017

Contents:

Chapter 1: Introduction	9
Supporting People: Preventing Homelessness, Supporting Independence	9
Vision	9
Values	9
Strategic Objectives	10
Broader Framework	10
Relevant Legislation	10
Maximising Impact	11
Chapter 2: People the Programme Helps	12
The involvement of people who use support services	12
Local authority role	12
Regional Collaborative Committee role	12
Provider role	13
Who is eligible for Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) funded services?	14
What is not eligible	14
Types of service eligible	15
Housing related support services	15
Style and approach	15
Outcomes	16
Monitoring	16
Chapter 3: Running the Programme	18
Supporting People National Advisory Board	18
The role of the Board	18
Supporting People policy links	19
Frequency of meetings	19
Secretariat arrangements	19
Membership	20
Regional Collaborative Committees	20
The role of the RCC	20
The role of the Coordinating local authority	22
Regional Development Coordinator	22
Membership of the RCC	24
Priority Setting	24
Meetings	25

Servicing and resourcing	25
Communication	25
The role of the Welsh Government in support of the RCCs and governance	26
Local arrangements to support RCCs	26
Chapter 4: Programme Governance	28
Planning cycle	28
Regional strategic plan	28
Local authority annual update	29
Annual review report	30
A prudent and preventative approach	31
Value for money	32
Commissioning and coordinating services to link to wider agendas	33
Innovation in delivering housing support	35
Commissioning and procurement	37
Charging for Supporting People services	42
Financial management	43
Chapter 5: Evidencing the Impact of the Programme	50
Research and evaluation	50
Research and evaluation steering group	50
Outcomes	50

Sector (audience)	Third sector and partner organisations involved with supporting Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords, other housing service providers, Supporting People Regional Collaborative Committees, Local Health Boards and other provider agencies.
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	
SPPG	Supporting People Programme Grant
SPNAB	Supporting People National Advisory Board
RCC	Regional Collaborative Committee
RDC	Regional Development Coordinator
RSP	Regional Strategic Plan
SPIN	Supporting People Information Network
SPODG	Supporting People Outcomes and Data Group
CHC	Community Housing Cymru
TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006
HR	Human Resources
NHS	National Health Service
UK	United Kingdom

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Supporting People: Preventing Homelessness, Supporting Independence

- 1.1.1 The Supporting People Programme is a Welsh Government programme that helps approximately 60,000 people each year to live independently. This Guidance replaces the previous: *Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG), Guidance – Wales (June 2013)*.
- 1.1.2 The Supporting People Programme provides vital support to people who find themselves in very difficult circumstances. It helps some of Wales' most vulnerable people to live independently in their own home or supported housing.
- 1.1.3 It is an early intervention programme which prevents people from becoming homeless or helps homeless people to find and keep accommodation. It helps vulnerable people address problems, sometimes multiple problems, such as debt, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, and mental health issues. The support is geared to what people need e.g. to help deal with mental health problems and/or substance misuse, help to improve their health and well-being and/or helped them progress into, or nearer to, a job or training opportunity.
- 1.1.4 The Programme continues to make a significant contribution to the implementation of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the core of which is to prevent homelessness. The Programme reduces or prevents the need for more costly interventions by the NHS and/or social care for individuals and families and, in some cases, people who fall into the criminal justice system. It is essential that the Programme has a clear vision, is underpinned by strong values and its strategic objectives include how it works with and complements other Welsh Government programmes to maximise efficiency.

1.2 Vision

- 1.2.1 The vision for the Supporting People Programme is "A Wales where nobody is homeless and everyone has a safe home where they can flourish".

1.3 Values

- 1.3.1 The values underpinning the Programme are essential in shaping the overall approach used across the whole of the Supported Housing sector. Our values also provide a clear benchmark for people who use Supporting People services to understand the support they should expect and the way it should be delivered:
- Putting the people who require assistance at the heart of the Programme, enabling vulnerable individuals to live a fulfilled, active and independent life.
 - Treating people with respect and as experts in their own lives.
 - Working with empathy, listening and building trusting relationships.
 - People having fair treatment and equal opportunities, regardless of the level of need.

- Behaving with integrity, being open, transparent and trustworthy.
- Being held accountable for our actions.
- Working together and valuing everyone's input.

1.4 Strategic Objectives

1.4.1 The Supporting People Programme plays a vital part in preventing homelessness and there is a recognition of the valuable contribution it makes towards the implementation of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, however this is under represented in statistical returns. It will also make an important contribution to the preventative legislation listed at 1.6.1.

1.4.2 Commissioning bodies and service providers will focus on providing services that impact on people's lives by:

- Preventing or relieving homelessness wherever possible.
- Supporting people to develop skills for life to flourish independently, in their own homes and as part of their communities.
- Supporting people to build their well-being and resilience to deal with shocks, stresses and uncertainty in their lives.
- Reducing demand on other services.
- Supporting people out of poverty.
- Making best use of resources for maximum impact.
- Delivering better relationships by working in partnership, across organisational, policy and sectorial boundaries.
- Avoiding or mitigating the effect of adverse childhood experiences.

1.4.3 Supporting People commissioners and service providers should ensure services align with the local, regional and national housing, health and social services agenda, including policies and programmes promoting: employability, tackling poverty, good mental health and well-being, community safety and reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences.

1.5 Broader Framework

- One of the key strengths of the Programme is that it enables support to be delivered to those who are in housing need.
- Expectation of a wide variety of services to be delivered, but commissioners need to understand the purpose of each one and how each plays a part in the wider context.
- Different people respond to different styles and approaches to support. Commissioners should be wary of a 'one size fits all' approach to purchasing services.
- Prioritise based on need but service delivery adopting a strengths based approach.

1.6 Relevant Legislation

1.6.1 Since 2014 The National Assembly for Wales has passed four pieces of legislation, which have prevention as a core objective:

- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014,
- Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014,
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015,
- Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

1.7 Maximising Impact

- 1.7.1 During a period of significant legislative upheaval, with Welfare Reform a key example, the Supporting People Programme enables the Welsh Government to meet the policy objectives outlined above and, more importantly, means that individuals at risk are able to access the support they need.

Chapter 2: People the Programme Helps

2.1 The involvement of people who use support services

- 2.1.1 There is an expectation that people who use Supporting People services will be at the heart of all aspects of the Programme, from commissioning and procurement through to shaping services. A range of methods should be developed to ensure people who use Supporting People services, and who would like further opportunity to take part, can do so and they will receive feedback on the impact of their involvement.
- 2.1.2 This guidance values the different experience, skills, and knowledge of all parties involved. Commissioners, providers, partner sectors and crucially the people who use services, all play a part in identifying what services are needed and how best they can be delivered.
- 2.1.3 Each RCC must have a working framework which ensures people who use Supporting People services can be involved in developing, commissioning, decommissioning and reviewing support services in whichever way suits them best.

2.2 Local Authority role

2.2.1 Each local authority should:

- Evidence to the RCC the impact on services from the involvement of people who use Supporting People services;
- Ensure that the experience of those who are using Supporting People services contributes to project development and service improvements agreed within the Regional Strategic Plan (the RSP is explained in Chapter 4);
- Ensure that input from people who use Supporting People services is incorporated into the development of service specifications and into commissioning, re-modelling and decommissioning services, so any unintended consequences can be recognised and considered. This must be reported to the RCC.
- Ensure contracts for services include the need for providers to include people who use Supporting People services in service development, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the involvement of people who use Supporting People services should also be expanded to all aspects of services including, but not limited to, staff recruitment.
- Demonstrate how they have involved people who use Supporting People services in the development of services, commissioning, monitoring and evaluation.

2.3 Regional Collaborative Committee Role

2.3.1 Each RCC should:

- Identify key ways that ideas and feedback can be sought;
- hold consultation/forums/events etc. where information can be shared and the

- views of people who use Supporting People services can be gathered;
- Ensure that the experiences of people who use Supporting People services contribute to project development and service improvements agreed within the Regional Strategic Plan;
- Ensure that commissioners and service providers support people who use Supporting People services to assist with the development of local and regional services;
- Consider evidence from commissioners and service providers on their involvement of people who use Supporting People services and ensure they feedback to the people who use Supporting People services about the impact of their involvement;
- Have a working framework for involving people who use Supporting People services and a structure that ensures this links in with local authority and providers;
- Work with providers to draw upon their skills and expertise, to ensure effective engagement with people who use Supporting People services;
- Encourage involvement from people who use Supporting People services on the Board, or ensure there are people who use Supporting People services champions on the Board;
- Demonstrate via the Annual Review how people who use Supporting People services are involved in shaping service delivery and the impact of their involvement.

2.3.2 The RCC's Annual Review will report on the progress and, crucially, the outcomes of the involvement of people who access Supporting People services. This should include evidence that those people:

- Have information about the services, the role of the local authority and the role of RCC;
- Can, should they wish to, feedback about their experience and have a variety of options and methods to do so;
- Who would like to be involved on a more formal strategic role, have a variety of ways to do so;
- Who would like to get involved, on an ad-hoc interest led basis, can do so.

2.4 Provider Role

2.4.1 Providers must ensure that people who use Supporting People services:

- Have opportunities to become involved in services, whether formally or informally, and are provided with a variety of ways to do so whether on an ongoing or ad-hoc basis;
- Are involved in all aspects of services and are able to shape services, including such things as staff recruitment;
- Are provided with appropriate support to access training to allow them to feel confident about participating;
- Are supported to work with local authorities on commissioning, re-modelling and decommissioning;
- Are provided with feedback on the results of their involvement.

2.4.2 Providers must be able to demonstrate how they have involved people who use Supporting People services and the difference their involvement has made.

2.5 Who is eligible for Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) funded services?

- Any person in need of housing support is eligible to receive housing support as long as they are eligible to receive public funding.
- In principle, no local connection criteria should be applied to access support, but under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, each local authority needs to fulfil its housing duties in light of available resources.
- These duties may lead to static support services being focused at those with a local connection who the authority has a duty to house. Where this is the case it will be agreed at local level on a service by service basis and in consultation with neighbouring authorities.

2.6 What is not eligible?

2.6.1 SPPG cannot fund care services. It complements and enhances such services, but its primary aim is to enable, not care for, people using its services.

2.6.2 Similarly, it cannot be used to fund domestic assistance services.

2.6.3 SPPG cannot fund local authority commissioning activity.

2.6.4 SPPG should not fund general housing management tasks which would normally be funded by rents or service charge, eg:

- Setting, collecting and accounting for the rent and service charges.
- Establishing, issuing and enforcing the licence or tenancy agreement.
- Providing the security and door entry elements of hard wired alarm services, these should form part of the rent and service charge.

2.6.5 However, notwithstanding the above, it may be used, within a SPPG service, to:

- Support an individual or household to prevent them becoming homeless under the terms of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
- Provide support to help people understand, fulfil and enact the responsibilities of holding a tenancy.
- Fund a specific activity on a case by case basis, e.g. at the early stage of support it could include transporting someone whose confidence is low or life is chaotic to a Housing Benefit department to make a claim for benefit.
- Do we need to include skills, training and employment to show SP as part of WG anti poverty drive?

2.7 Types of Service Eligible

- 2.7.1 To clarify the types of services that are eligible for funding from the SPPG this section provides a framework around which discussions, negotiations and decisions can be made.
- 2.7.2 SPPG will be used to fund those services identified as strategic priorities by the RCCs and as outlined in their Regional Strategic Plan. Local authority commissioning should be aligned with the Regional Strategic Plan for their area and their existing and future homelessness strategies under section 52 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, required to be in place by 2018.

2.8 Housing-related Support Services

- 2.8.1 Housing-related support is provided to help vulnerable people develop or maintain the skills and confidence necessary to live as independently as possible. At its core is the prevention of homelessness. Support can be offered to anyone eligible, regardless of their tenure.
- 2.8.2 People eligible for services must be over 16.
- 2.8.3 The principles of housing-related support are to:
- Prevent homelessness.
 - Support people to access, maintain and manage accommodation by assisting them to develop or maintain the necessary skills and confidence to live as independently as possible.
 - Avoid the need for people to live in inappropriate institutional settings.
 - Provide support to people who are presently, or have a history of, living unsettled patterns of life that may have contributed to chaotic patterns of behaviour.
- 2.8.4 Provision of housing-related support services will be based on identified or assessed needs; this assessment must be flexible and person centred. The Programme encourages innovation, e.g. consideration of developments within housing, support, social care, health and Welsh Government Tackling Poverty programmes. It is accepted that the services which go together to create 'housing-related support' are broad and wide ranging.

2.9 Style and Approach

- 2.9.1 Supporting People services must be enabling, and develop a person's independence, i.e. 'doing with' as distinct from 'doing for'. The focus of the service should be to encourage and support the person to exercise personal choice and self-determination and accentuate their strengths.
- 2.9.2 Services must have good links with, and refer or signpost people to, services which provide opportunities for education, training, volunteering and employment.
- 2.9.3 Support packages must be developed and agreed with the person who is using Supporting People services and any risks considered. The length of

time people are supported should be kept to a minimum to avoid creating dependency (eg some local authorities have time limits after which point cases are reviewed to establish the continued need for support, or an alternative more appropriate support). Support offered will include short term interventions to prevent homelessness. Consideration should be given to the length of time a service is available and whether some long term support is actually care or creating dependency rather than creating independence.

2.9.4 There is substantial flexibility in the use of Supporting People funding, provided it helps enable people to access or sustain accommodation. This may include mediation with landlords and family, help with accessing a tenancy, preparation for managing a tenancy, housing related support provided via group work, and small sums for innovation where they are used with the person to enhance their ability to live more independently.

2.9.5 Guidance on commissioning can be found in Chapter 4.

2.9.6 Questions to be considered when commissioning, reviewing or identifying whether a service will come within the remit of Supporting People Programme Grant may include the following, but this list is not exhaustive:

2.9.7 Will the support offered:

- Prevent the person from becoming homeless or relieve their homelessness?
- Support people to secure and settle in suitable accommodation when homeless?
- Avoid people moving to more costly temporary accommodation or care options?
- Keep people safe in the community and allow them to feel on an 'even keel'?
- Contain the skills and knowledge to pull in specialist services at the right time to prevent more costly options?
- Cover key areas that enable an individual to establish their independence to flourish, improve their well-being and help tackle poverty?

2.10 Outcomes

2.10.1 Services commissioned must be outcomes focussed, and support should focus on what outcomes are to be achieved by the individuals supported. These outcomes should be set in partnership with the person using the service, in the spirit of co-production.

2.11 Monitoring

2.11.1 Where an individual has been referred into a service, or is assessed at a gateway and is found to be at risk of homelessness or homeless, the support

provider /gateway must refer the person to the local authority homelessness service for assessment under Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

- 2.11.2 Where duty is owed, provision of support will be recorded as a reasonable step in discharging the relevant duty, and the outcome of the support must be reported to the homelessness team to be recorded under the terms of statutory data Homelessness returns.
- 2.11.3 Services that receive SPPG will be expected to regularly report performance and outcomes to the contracting local authority who will use the information in their contract management, and collate and provide relevant information and reports to the RCC as required. The eligibility, i.e. use of the grant, will be subject to scrutiny and inspection by the Welsh Government.

Chapter 3: Running the Programme

3.1 Supporting People National Advisory Board

3.1.1 The aim of the Supporting People National Advisory Board is to advise the Welsh Government, in respect of the strategic direction, policy and guidance for the Programme. In so doing the Board will ensure that it meets the aims and objectives of the Programme.

3.2 The Role of the Board

- It is an advisory body and as such must be bound by the reasonable expectations of such a body. It is important to recognise that the Board does not have executive powers or functions.
- The Board advises the Welsh Government within the remit agreed for it by the Cabinet Secretary.
- The Board will not involve itself with the direct day to day operational activity of the Programme unless specifically requested to do so by the Welsh Government.
- Given the advisory nature of the Board, the Welsh Government may make decisions without reference to advice provided by the Supporting People National Advisory Board.

3.2.1 The role of the Board, through consultation and collaboration with RCC and other bodies, will include:

- advising the Cabinet Secretary on the national policy direction of, the Supporting People Programme,
- monitoring the development and performance of RCCs and the administration of Supporting People Programme,
- advising the Cabinet Secretary on the appropriate implementation of, and changes to the Supporting People Programme governance, grant conditions, policy, guidance and legislation,
- receiving regular reports from officials monitoring the governance of the RCCs and provide feedback to the RCCs,
- hold annual events to listen to the views and experiences of people who use Supporting People services, and use them to shape policy advice,
- overseeing the distribution of the Supporting People Programme Grant and the programme of research and evaluation,
- providing assurance that processes and practices are fair, transparent, equitable and that planning and procurement are clearly defined,
- implementing the Welsh Government's policy direction particularly on preventative services, health and well-being, tackling poverty, economic growth and prevention of homelessness,
- advising the Cabinet Secretary and, where appropriate, make recommendations on action.

3.2.2 All members will also be responsible for:

- Promoting the Welsh Government policy and legislative direction particularly around early intervention and homelessness prevention,
- ensuring that decisions made by the Board follow proper procedures, are supported by sufficient high quality information and are robust and defensible,
- demonstrating awareness of evidence and policy approaches to the Supporting People Programme in other parts of the UK and beyond in order to learn from those and to evaluate Wales' relative performance,
- ensuring the Supporting People National Advisory Board operates effectively and efficiently within its remit,
- exercising independent judgment, reasonable care, skill and diligence in undertaking duties,
- considering and commenting on reports from task and finish groups on progress in delivering the Board's work plan,
- reporting to their representative bodies the agreed communication messages from the meetings,
- maintaining, where necessary, the confidentiality of information that may be shared in meetings of the Board or in Board correspondence.

3.3 Supporting People Policy Links

3.3.1 The Supporting People Programme has close policy links across the Welsh Government e.g. Social Services, Health, Probation and Community Safety, Tackling Poverty and Public Service Policy. Welsh Government officials on the Board have a role in strengthening working links with other parts of the Welsh Government and to ensure that the Programme is aligned with future policy developments. Other members of the Board can also help to link different programmes via their external links.

3.3.2 The Board can decide whether to establish sub-groups and to co-opt members as circumstances dictate. It may choose to form sub-groups to look at particular tasks, e.g. where it requires a particular policy or delivery focus that the whole Board may not need to concentrate upon, or on cross-cutting areas of work. The Chair will decide how to allocate additional work and responsibilities on an ongoing basis.

3.3.3 All sub-groups/task and finish groups will report to the Board.

3.4 Frequency of Meetings

3.4.1 The board will meet quarterly. Additional meetings will be held when required. From time to time, the Board will review its effectiveness with a view to improvements wherever possible. It will develop a rolling programme of work.

3.5 Secretariat Arrangements

3.5.1 The Supporting People National Advisory Board will be supported by the Homelessness, Supported Housing and Revenue Grants Branch from within the Welsh Government Housing Policy Division.

3.6 Membership

- Deputy Director, Housing Policy Division, Welsh Government.
- Three independent individuals, two of whom will be the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Welsh Local Government Association.
- Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru.
- Public Health Wales.
- Community Housing Cymru.
- Cymorth Cymru.
- Housing Leadership Cymru.
- Wales Community Rehabilitation Service.
- The Supporting People Information Network.
- Chair of the Supporting People Finance and Research Group.
- Chair of the Supporting People Governance Group.

3.6.1 Other Welsh Government officials and other parties will attend as required.

3.7 Regional Collaborative Committees

3.7.1 The aim and overall focus of the RCCs is to provide strategic direction and scrutiny, at a regional level, for the Supporting People Programme. They will be responsible to the Cabinet Secretary on regional and local collaborative delivery of the Supporting People Programme to ensure the most efficient and effective services are delivered. The RCCs will inform and advise the Cabinet Secretary on the production of proposed Supporting People Programme Regional Strategic Plans for the allocation of grant against agreed priorities.

3.8 The role of the RCC

- The RCC will work in line with their Memorandum of Understanding.

3.8.1 In detail, the role of RCCs includes:

3.8.2 To advise on:

- Regional and local delivery and compliance with the national Supporting People Programme strategic guidance and all grant conditions.
- Regional and local needs mapping.
- The operation of commissioning and procurement practice.
- The quality of regional and local services, in particular against the Supporting People National Outcomes Framework.
- The involvement of people who use Supporting People services in shaping and developing service provision.
- Make recommendations to the Welsh Government and the Cabinet Secretary on:
 - Local and regional spend via Supporting People Spend Plans in line with client category priorities.
 - Variation of Supporting People Programme Grant between client categories (over 10% of total client group allocation) within the local

- and regional Supporting People Programme plan and within the region.

3.8.3 Planning:

- To ensure an appropriate balance of preventative and reactive services.
- To ensure an appropriate diversity and balance of general and specialist services to meet the needs of different client groups.
- To ensure formal links with Social Services and Well-being Regional Partnership Boards, as well as Public Service Boards, are in place and establish a robust governance structure and reporting arrangements to ensure the work of the RCC fits in with wider regional commissioning.
- To produce the Regional Strategic Plan, including a Spend Plan, to be submitted to the Social Services and Well-being Regional Partnership Service Boards and Welsh Government.
- To recommend escalating any issues that cannot be resolved through local and/or regional collaboration to the Welsh Government, and ultimately the Welsh Cabinet Secretary.
- Implement and update the people who use Supporting People Services Frameworks to ensure people who use Supporting People services are involved in developing, commissioning and reviewing support services.
- To ensure local authorities provide appropriate monitoring information of Supporting People spend including timely identification and reporting of underspend.
- To develop an awareness of local, regional and national Supporting People services in order to identify opportunities to realise efficiencies by coordinated planning and provision of services.
- To collaborate with, Social Services and Well-being Regional Partnership Boards, other RCCs and substance misuse Area Planning Boards in order to plan and prioritise service requirements to enable singular commissioning and procurement exercises.
- To liaise with other RCCs to provide advice on coordinating commissioning, procurement and funding of cross-region and national service provision.
- To ensure Regional Strategic Plans consider key strategic objectives such as those of local homelessness strategies (to be published in 2018) and tackling poverty, social care preventative activity, health and community safety priorities.
- To align with other Welsh Government Anti Poverty programmes.

3.8.4 Administration:

- To ensure effective information exchange between RCC members (noting confidentiality requirements) and between RCCs.
- To receive from the coordinating local authority a register of regional services that may be commissioned or procured at short notice should funding become available. These may be new services requiring procurement or expansion of existing services. The process of approval by the RCC must be clear.
- To receive monitoring information on complaints and to escalate any issues to Welsh Government as appropriate.

- To advise the coordinating local authority and the Welsh Government where the RCC considers that local practice is in breach of the Grant conditions. To also advise the Welsh Government on any disputes within the RCC.
- Maintain continuous assessment on the RCC Membership to ensure parity of representation, and awareness of and participation by all Supporting People stakeholders.

3.9 The role of the Coordinating Local authority

3.9.1 In each RCC region there will be one coordinating local authority that will:

- Draft the proposed Regional Strategic Plan for the local authorities in that area.
- Organise the RCC meetings.
- Maintain a register of services that may be commissioned or procured at short notice.
- Employ a Regional Development Coordinator (RDC) and ensure they work regionally in support of the RCC.
- Develop and support effective partnership working within the region on the Supporting People Programme.
- Develop a plan that will incorporate local and regional arrangements and evidence the outcomes of the involvement of people who use Supporting People services, to be evaluated and presented to the RCC.
- Ensure dialogue and collaboration between the local and regional levels.
- Support the RCC so that it functions effectively and is appropriately serviced.

3.9.2 The coordinating local authority can be changed on agreement with other local authorities as needed.

3.10 Regional Development Coordinator

3.10.1 The role of the RDC is to coordinate and contribute towards the development of the RCC.

3.10.2 The RDCs are employed within each region by a 'coordinating local authority', which holds responsibility for the recruitment and employment of the RDC. This work will include ensuring the role is being fulfilled as anticipated.

3.10.3 The purpose of the RDC is:

- To develop and support effective partnership working within the region in relation to the Supporting People Programme and other regional bodies, in particular the Regional Partnership Boards and the Public Service Boards.
- To support the RCC so that it functions effectively and is appropriately serviced.

- To facilitate communication between the RCC and the Supporting People National Advisory Board to ensure the smooth running of the Supporting People Programme arrangements and collaborative decision making.
- To promote and facilitate regional service delivery.
- To attend and contribute to the Regional Provider Forum meetings.
- To collaborate with other RDCs across Wales to share and promote good practice.
- To provide administrative support to the RCC.

3.10.4 Key tasks expected of each RDC are shown in the individual job descriptions and must be based on the Welsh Government requirements for this post. They may be slightly different across the regions, depending on the needs of the coordinating authority.

3.10.5 The RDCs will attend the RCC meetings, but will not be voting members of the committee. As part of their coordination of the meetings they will ensure appropriate records are kept of all decisions voted on, ensure the membership remains in line with the Guidance, and meetings are quorate where necessary.

3.10.6 The RDCs may attend, or coordinate, individual planning and task and finish groups, however, the RCC members are expected to feed in to this work and this may be done with, or without the RDC. The RDC will continue to coordinate the work these groups undertake.

3.10.7 The RDC has responsibility for submitting a number of key documents to the Welsh Government and this includes the Annual Review, the Regional Strategic Plan, the Regional Spend Plans and Outturns.

3.10.8 The RDC will work with the Welsh Government to ensure any issues with the coordinating role are appropriately brought to their notice.

3.10.9 RDCs are expected to encourage the sharing of best practice between the regions, and this can, in part, be done through the RDC Network which is hosted by the Welsh Government.

3.10.10 RDCs have responsibility for communication with the RCC, the Welsh Government and other stakeholders, ensuring all members are kept up to date with key developments and/or issues. This should be done in a way which is agreed by the members of the RCC.

3.11 The role of the Local Authority – please refer to section 4.11.3.

3.12 The role of the Provider – please refer to section 4.11.16.

3.13 Membership of the Regional Collaborative Committees

3.13.1 There should be equal representation of key groups. The number of local authority members should be equal to the combined number of landlord and support provider places. The membership of the RCC will be made up of:

- Local authority – this may include Elected Members and/or officers including the Supporting People Team and Homelessness Advice service.
- Health.
- Probation.
- Providers (representing long term and short term services) elected and supported by Cymorth Cymru and Landlords elected and supported by Community Housing Cymru (CHC).
- Co-opted members at the discretion of the RCC, but will not have voting rights.
- Additional local authority officers, the RDC, a representative of the Supporting People National Advisory Board and Welsh Government officials will also be able to attend the RCCs, but will not have voting rights.

3.13.2 The RCC could also consider representation from people who use Supporting People services. However, as a minimum they should ensure that all members themselves represent people who use Supporting People services' interests.

3.13.3 **Note:** Providers and landlord representatives do not need to be members of Cymorth Cymru or CHC.

3.14 Priority Setting

3.14.1 The RCCs will develop a three year Regional Strategic Plan (first published 2017), which will set out priorities/spend for the region and be reported against annually. These plans should consider the local Homelessness Strategy, when published, and homelessness data returns as well as wider preventative priorities. The co-ordinating local authority will put together the plans for the RCC to review. The RCC will identify regional priorities and any other changes required and then submit the proposed regional Spend Plan to the Welsh Government by the 21st January for confirmation.

3.14.2 Local commissioning should complement the regional priorities identified in the Regional Strategic Plan. The RCCs will receive sufficient reporting from local authorities to enable them to ensure that Supporting People Programme Grant is being planned and delivered according to the principles of the preventative legislation listed at 1.6.1. The RCC will be expected, when appropriate, to advise local authorities when the RCC considers that the use of Supporting People Programme Grant at the local authority level appears to not meet priorities.

3.15 Meetings

3.15.1 RCCs are required to meet a minimum of four times per year, as a formal RCC meeting .

3.15.2 The Chair and Vice Chair of the RCC will be appointed annually and the posts will be held by two different types of agencies.

3.15.3 The RCC may set up task and finish groups at its discretion.

3.16 Servicing and Resourcing

3.16.1 The RDC will provide administrative support to the RCC.

3.16.2 Local authorities will provide quarterly reports to the RCC via the RDC. These should provide an overview of progress locally and regionally as well as additional issues the RCC may wish to consider.

3.16.3 Local authority Supporting People programme managers may attend, participate in and support the work of the RCC.

3.16.4 The RDC will ensure dialogue and collaboration takes place between the local and regional levels in order to ensure any issues are resolved as early as possible in the planning process.

3.17 Communication

3.17.1 The RCC will put in place consultation arrangements with the following stakeholders:

- People who use Supporting People services.
- Local authority Supporting People Planning Groups.
- Social Services and Well-being Regional Partnership Boards.
- Public Service Boards.
- Local and regional homelessness forums.
- Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards.
- Domestic Abuse Planning Groups.
- Regional provider forums.
- Other relevant bodies.

3.17.2 The Welsh Government will expect to see evidence of this in each Regional Strategic Plan.

3.17.3 The individual members of the RCC will be expected to communicate with their own constituency e.g. local authority members, other providers etc.

3.17.4 The RCC will ensure the following information is published on their webpages in the timescales outlined below to enable all stakeholders in the Programme to be kept informed. A link to the RCC webpage will be hosted by the Welsh Government and any changes to the web link should be notified to the Welsh Government.

- Regional and Local Spend Plan – April following submission to the Welsh Government.
- Regional Strategic Plans – April following submission to the Welsh Government.
- Annual Review Reports – September following submission to the Welsh Government.
- Meeting Minutes – Following sign off by the Committee.
- Meeting papers – as determined by the Committee.
- Key messages from the meeting – within 4 weeks of the meeting.

3.18 The Role of the Welsh Government in Support of the RCCs and Governance

3.18.1 The Welsh Government representatives will attend RCC meetings whenever possible, get involved as and when issues arise, in a timely fashion and when these require escalation, and assist in conflict mediation. It will seek to mediate issues informally with relevant officials. The Welsh Government will collate, and on some occasions summarise, reports received from the RCCs to provide a national picture of service delivery. It will also monitor arrangements in partnership with stakeholders to consider how the governance arrangements are working and how these can be improved to support the development of the RCCs.

3.19 Local arrangements to support RCCs

3.19.1 Local needs analysis and identified priorities for Supporting People services will be determined by the local Supporting People Planning Groups. This will be discussed at the RCC meetings and then feed into the three year Regional Strategic Plans.

3.19.2 Local Supporting People Planning Groups will:

- Advise on the local Homelessness Strategy and how services can be configured to ensure an appropriate balance of preventative and reactive services.
- Develop local commissioning plans for Supporting People services.
- Ensure commissioners (including Families First and Flying Start), service providers, and most importantly people who use Supporting People services, are involved in the planning, development and commissioning of services and service responses that meet identified needs and agreed strategic priorities on a local and regional level.
- Ensure service providers, wider stakeholders and key commissioners are advised and informed on matters relating to the planned development, improvement or decommissioning of services to vulnerable people.
- Ensure the experience of people who use Supporting Peoples services contributes to project development and service improvements.
- Ensure that funding decisions have undergone an Equality Impact Assessment and that service delivery fosters good relationships and promotes equality and inclusive outcomes for all citizens.

- Ensure commissioners, service providers and most importantly people who use Supporting People services assist with the development of local and regional service specifications.
- 3.19.3 In many areas, links already exist with a wide range of stakeholder groups. Where such links do not exist, local authorities will need to establish and support such arrangements. Where appropriate, for example, where there is limited capacity, local arrangements may be cross boundary with two or more teams working together to maximise resources.
- 3.19.4 Any future local and regional collaborative arrangements must not lose sight of the option to commission some very local arrangements where these best meet needs. What is essential is that all service developments at local, regional or national level are appropriately aligned to identify local needs and priorities to:
- Aid the development of shared plans and priorities which are supported by evidence of need.
 - Aid the development of an integrated and coordinated approach to focus on prevention and reduce duplication or fragmentation and help with the development and delivery of high quality, cost effective services.
 - Ensure that service planning and commissioning activity is co-ordinated with other national grant programmes such as Families First and Flying Start.
 - Support the development of appropriate links with other local and national policies, strategies, initiatives and funding streams.
 - Coordinate with the appropriate use of Social Housing Grant on a local and regional basis.

Chapter 4: Programme Governance

4.1 Planning Cycle

- 4.1.1 Effective planning and reporting is the bedrock of effective commissioning and procurement to ensure the outcomes of the Supporting People Programme are achieved and is central to both meeting the needs of people who use Supporting People services and providing the best value for public money.
- 4.1.2 This Chapter outlines the responsibilities of RCCs and local authorities when planning services; and provides an overview of the service planning process for support services, funded by the Supporting People Programme.

4.2 Regional Strategic Plan

- 4.2.1 The RCCs will develop a three year Regional Strategic Plan advising local authorities on effective regional and local collaborative delivery of the Programme to ensure the most efficient and effective service delivery.
- 4.2.2 The Regional Strategic Plan will set out recommended priorities and the proposed balance of spending for the region in terms of the Regional Collaborative Committee's priorities. The detail within the Regional Strategic Plan will be informed by the local authority Local Commissioning Plans.
- 4.2.3 The table below provides an overview of the structure of the Regional Strategic Plan:

	Section heading	Description of content
1	Strategic Priorities	National, regional and local strategic priorities and themes which have emerged from the 'population assessment' (section 14 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Homelessness Strategy (Part 2 s50(1) Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the well-being assessment and plan (section 51(1) Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
2	Supply, needs assessment, outcomes analysis, consultation evidence and service gaps	A summary of how evidence and information gathered from people who use Supporting People services and other stakeholders is shaping service commissioning developments.
3	Priorities for service development	Details of client groups that are a priority and proposals for service development, decommissioning and remodelling.
4	Efficiencies to improve service delivery	An overview of the approach that will be taken to implement efficiencies to achieve value for money.
5	Equality Impact Assessment	A summary of an equality screening exercise and assessment of the impact of service changes on each of the equality strands.

- 4.2.4 The plan will be developed using information submitted by Supporting People teams from their local and regional service planning frameworks; which should include, for example, an analysis of the supply of services across the region and needs assessment.
- 4.2.5 It will be reviewed and agreed by the RCCs and submitted to Welsh Government on a three year basis.
- 4.2.6 As well as providing strategic direction for delivery of the Programme the document will:
- Show the evidence used.
 - Provide an overview of how need has been identified.
 - Provide evidence of how conclusions have been reached for service development priorities.
 - Provide evidence that robust partnership working is in place within each area; ensuring that people who use Supporting People services, support providers and other statutory stakeholders are given meaningful opportunities to influence decisions at both a local and regional level.

4.3 Local Authority Annual Update

- 4.3.1 Local authorities will provide the RCCs with an Annual Update; this document will provide the RCCs with a detailed overview of their recommendations for commissioning and remodelling for the following financial year and how they link into the priorities in the Regional Strategic Plan.
- 4.3.2 The Annual Update will include a Spend Plan and financial analysis which identifies financial commitments and an overview of how any future changes to budget levels will be managed.
- 4.3.3 Local authorities will utilise their own internal processes and reporting requirements to sign off the Annual Update before submitting it to the RDC and co-ordinating authority.
- 4.3.4 Each local authority will submit its annual update to the RDC and the coordinating local authority, which will be responsible for:
- Collating the information for their region.
 - Submitting a regional Annual Update to Welsh Government by the 21st January each year.
- 4.3.5 The structure of the local authority Annual Update is provided in the table below:

	Section Heading
1	Model of service provision
2	Number of units
3	Client group
4	Current year
5	Next year

6	Estimated Funding/Saving Per Annum
7	Reason for commissioning / remodelling / decommissioning
8	Local authority spend plan

4.4 Annual Review Report

4.4.1 RCC's are required to submit an Annual Review Report to the Supporting People National Advisory Board, which will advise the Cabinet Secretary on progress of each RCC during the previous financial year.

4.4.2 The following table provides an overview of the structure of the Annual Review Report:

	Section Heading	Description – Up to 500 Words for each Section.
1	Executive Summary.	An overview of progress made during the previous reporting year to be written by the RCC Chair and Vice Chair once all other sections are completed.
2	Introduction.	Insert details for each region.
3	Case Studies.	X2 case studies which provide examples of significant work undertaken by the RCC since the last report was submitted which has improved service delivery, or the experience of people who received Supporting People services.
4	How people who access services are involved.	How have people who access services been involved and shaped decisions? What changes have resulted from their involvement and how has this been fed back to them.
5	Service Development 500 words maximum on each of these sections. Please include any barriers/challenges you have encountered and how you have overcome them. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How have decisions been shaped by spend plan, needs analysis, outcomes and other sources of data? What changes have resulted? 2. What Regional and Sub regional (for RCCs with more than 2 local authorities) work is commissioned and how have services improved since the last Annual Report? 3. How can you demonstrate a more early intervention and preventative approach to homelessness is being delivered, e.g. has the fixed site / floating support ratio 	

	<p>changed in the last 12 months?</p> <p>4. What links does the RCC have with Social Services and Health Services in the region? Have there been any joint service commissioning or pooled resources? If so, can you give details of the project(s).</p> <p>5. What governance links have been made with regional strategic / planning groups, including the Regional Partnership Board and the Public Service Board?</p> <p>6. Following the Aylward recommendations, what proportion of spend on services for older people tenure is neutral i.e. equally available to home owners, PRS and social landlord tenants? If not, what plans do the RCC have in place to deliver tenure neutral services and within what timescales?</p> <p>7. In the RCC region what joint commissioning is undertaken between Supporting People and other key programmes e.g. Communities First, Families First, Flying Start, Community Safety/domestic violence? Please list the project, local authority and which funding streams are involved?</p>	
6	RCC Members Appraisal/Feedback	An overview of feedback/ responses regarding RCC to be collated and drafted by the RDC.
7	RCC Attendance Sheet	

4.4.3 The Annual Review report will be collaboratively produced by all members of the RCC.

4.4.4 The RDC and the coordinating local authority will be responsible for:

- Collating the information for the Annual Review.
- Ensuring the report is collaboratively produced.
- Submitting an Annual Review Report to the Welsh Government by 30th June each year.

4.5 A Prudent and Preventative Approach

4.5.1 The commissioning of Supporting People services should be focused on prevention, but should also consider the principles based on the Prudent Healthcare approach:

- Achieve secure housing and well-being with the public, people who use Supporting People services and professionals as equal partners through co-production;

- Ensure services deliver support as early as possible to prevent people reaching crisis;
- Support those with the greatest housing need first, making the most effective use of all skills and resources;
- Do only what is needed, no more, no less; and do no harm;
- Develop and remodel services based on good evidence of best practice, in a consistent manner.

4.5.2 To achieve this, consideration should be given to how services are modelled and delivered, and identify how services can evolve and adapt to the changing environment.

4.5.3 This section identifies the areas and considerations to be taken by commissioners and providers of services to find the efficiencies and ensure funding is targeted effectively.

4.6 Value for Money

4.6.1 It is necessary to pursue an approach that places the needs of people who require services at the heart of the process and enables them to achieve their outcomes. This must focus on the need to deliver services to as many people who need them as possible to achieve the maximum benefit from the Programme. However, a focus on delivering services to as many people as possible must take into account people with most complex needs.

4.6.2 It is also crucial to recognise and value the staff who are delivering services within the Supporting People Programme, often to people experiencing crises and a variety of complex needs. Commissioners and providers should ensure good quality, support, development and terms and conditions for those who are delivering services. The way support staff are valued inevitably impacts upon the quality of support offered.

4.6.3 It is necessary to seek to achieve funding solutions for services which ensure services are targeted at meeting the needs of people at risk of homelessness. This may include the alignment or integration of sectors, funding streams or portfolios, including (but not limited to) Supporting People, Housing, Health, Social Care and Tackling Poverty (where appropriate) with the aim of ensuring that the most efficient and effective service is being delivered. This may include jointly contracting and monitoring services.

4.6.4 RCCs and local authorities should recognise there may be legitimate reasons why costs exceed benchmarks in a small number of specialist services. A key component of the approach to be taken is that all stakeholders should have recourse to open discussion around these issues, in the context of discussions on value for money, where it is recognised that commissioners have the final decision.

4.6.5 Key principles to be considered are outlined under '4.5 A Prudent and Preventative Approach', broader issues to take into account are:

- Ensure that the people who need services are at the heart of delivery and its focus is on what is of value to them.
- Value for money works both ways – providers need to be able to cover the actual costs of service provision. Commissioners must consider full cost recovery and providers should be transparent as to what these costs are and what other income they receive for the scheme.
- Tenancy support services must complement local authority housing advice services and access to services should be through supporting people support referral gateway or other mechanisms which are clearly accountable to the local authority.
- Exclusions and evictions should also be subject to accountability and monitoring by the local authority.
- Encourage innovation to develop more effective and efficient models.
- Where possible develop services that are coordinated to minimise duplication and deliver on shared policy objectives.
- Services should be accountable but stakeholders need to ensure reporting mechanisms are proportionate, taking into consideration contract value, levels of anticipated risk, and intensity of support provided.
- The implications of the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 should be considered, with appropriate influence on how services are procured to deliver collective benefit to the community. (Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014, Part 2 – <http://gov.wales/docs/phhs/publications/151125pt2socialen.pdf>).
- The importance of valuing the workforce which delivers these services is crucial to ensuring the quality of service delivered through both financial and non-financial means (i.e. through a 'living wage', as recommended by the Living Wage Foundation, employee assistance programmes, training and development opportunities).

4.7 Commissioning and Coordinating Services to link with Wider Agendas

- 4.7.1 To ensure funding is focused, there is a role for both RCCs and local authorities to ensure services are flexibly commissioned and coordinated to enhance and complement services which sit outside the Programme.
- 4.7.2 The following offers some examples of what RCCs and local authorities should consider when commissioning and coordinating services to ensure they are providing value for money.

Homelessness

- Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) funded services must work closely with Housing Options teams, using homelessness data to develop

a focussed approach to preventing homelessness. (From 2018 teams must commission to reflect need identified in homelessness services).

- Can SPPG and Homelessness Grant funded services be delivered more collaboratively through merged or jointly commissioned / coordinated projects?
- Can services be delivered by alternative models, eg Housing First?

Social Services, Health & Well-being

- How do the SPPG funded services fit with the way local authorities and regions are modelling services to prevent people accessing more costly health and care options?
- Do SPPG services support the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway?
- Are SPPG services accessible for those approaching Social Services, mental health, physical health and drug and alcohol services - and are the staff who are undertaking the initial assessments aware of the Supporting People services available?
- Are SPPG services available to all in the community, regardless of their tenure?
- What are the opportunities for integrated commissioning between Supporting People, Social Care and Health?
- Is there a robust governance link between the RCC and the Social Services Regional Partnership Board?

Domestic Abuse

- Are SPPG funded services integrated with other domestic abuse services and broader community safety priorities? Eg perpetrator programmes.
- Are SPPG funded services working in partnership with local authority Housing Options teams to prevent homelessness, eg through target hardening, wherever possible and, where possible, reducing demand for more costly accommodation and support options?
- Are local authorities and RCCs adopting integrated commissioning principles with wider partners, e.g. to focus funding and create efficiencies?

Tackling Poverty

- What is the potential for jointly commissioning services in order to find efficiencies in both budgets (especially in relation to services such as family support)?

- How can SPPG funded services support people to link up to employability programmes as this is a true route to independence?

Probation and Youth Justice

- What housing and support services can be jointly commissioned with criminal justice agencies?
- How can those homeless people leaving prison, including young people in the criminal justice system, be supported to re-establish themselves in the community, reduce re-offending and reduce costs?
- How can services link more closely with Housing Options teams and help meet housing duties? Is there potential to jointly commission services with homelessness services?

4.7.3 These considerations are by no means exhaustive, but the Welsh Government will look for evidence of how each RCC is working in partnership to link funding streams and focus services.

4.8 Innovation in Delivering Housing Support

4.8.1 There are good examples of RCCs and local authorities delivering new ways of providing support. This section considers some ways in which new ways of working may allow a more efficient use of ever reducing resources.

Reduce the need for Support Plans for very short term interventions

- The 'support plan' reflects the 'care plan' approach in Social Services, who are already looking at different ways of providing their services.
- Innovation in support delivery is crucial, but local authorities need to consider the relevance of the Support Plan or Personal Housing Plan for the service being delivered and its purpose.
- Commissioners, along with support providers, should look at different ways of providing services. For very short term interventions, ie 2 weeks, is there always a need for a 'support plan' approach? Commissioners and support providers would still be required to capture outcomes data, a potential vehicle could be the Personal Housing Plan.

Locality based support

- If people are going to be effectively supported, but with fewer resources, these developments offer the opportunity to look at innovative practice and service delivery which focuses on what is of real value to the person being supported.
- There are some examples of emerging support services based in localities (regardless of tenure / 'lead need'); support being offered when

the person needs and wants it; utilising technology to reduce costs; support based on recognising the person's strengths.

- The amount of time being spent on travel has reduced, effectively freeing up time for direct support provision.

Support on Demand

- There is evidence that 'support on demand' is a more effective and efficient approach in some instances. People can access support when they need it. This has the potential to eliminate waiting lists, ensuring support is accessed early enough and allowing support to be delivered on the terms of the person.
- This approach will not be effective for everyone and support needs to be delivered in a way that is appropriate for that person.

Static and Floating Support

- By pooling resources between static and floating support and allowing them to work in a more responsive way it has proved to reduce the costs of providing services, while continuing to support a similar number of people.

Developing Regional Services and Consortia

- RCCs and local authorities should consider the opportunities of regional services. Is there potential for efficiencies in management and/or staffing if schemes are structured and modelled regionally?
- RCCs and local authorities need to consider the possible savings of providers working in different types of partnership. Is there scope locally or within the region for commissioners and providers to promote the development of consortia, potentially saving on management and 'back office' costs? (Commissioning timescales should reflect the additional time these take to form).

Ensuring Commissioners have an Overview of Support Delivered

- There are a wide variety of support services delivered to a wide variety of people. RCCs and local authorities should consider the purpose of each service and what they want it to achieve. Those with the most complex needs might require higher levels of support and people from particular client groups might require more specialist services. When commissioning these services, achieving a particular number of people supported may not be the main aim; it is important that the support delivered achieves its purpose.
- Commissioners and RCCs should explore the communities within which support services are developed, map and tap into the strengths, opportunities and existing networks within these communities.

- In both cases RCCs and local authorities need to consider, and evidence where possible, the true value of services. There will be times when services are more costly, but could well provide greater value in relation to their preventative effect, further on down the line.

4.9 Commissioning and Procurement

4.9.11 Caveat

This section provides an overview of the principles of good practice when commissioning services. The Value Wales procurement Route Planner (<http://prp.gov.wales/docs/prp/generalgoodsservices/280613ODimpguidanceeng.pdf>) provides detailed guidance which must be followed by public bodies when commissioning and procuring services.

This section is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice or to provide an exhaustive explanation of relevant legislation.

- 4.9.2 Good quality commissioning and procurement is key to the provision of quality services which meet the needs of people who use Supporting People services and provide the best value for public money. Local authorities will need to make judgements, based on local and regional homelessness, tackling poverty, social care and community safety strategic objectives. Services must reflect the most appropriate approaches to market development and procurement in their local area, including different contract forms, grants or in-house provision. Contracts should have explicit and transparent funding arrangements including a shared understanding of funding contributions from rents, Housing Benefit, Social Care and Health as well as other Welsh Government programmes such as Families First or Community Safety programmes.
- 4.9.3 It is essential that service provision and service models evolve to reflect the Welsh legislative and policy agenda. The legislation listed at 1.6.1 all highlight the role of prevention in meeting the needs of people within a constrained public funding environment. Commissioning arrangements must be flexible, focus on greatest value for people receiving services and a long term preventative agenda.
- 4.9.4 This section outlines the responsibilities of local government when procuring services and provides a high level perspective of the commissioning process for housing-related support services.

4.9.5 Commissioning

A collaborative approach, with the needs of the people who use Supporting People services at the centre of decision making, was identified by the Aylward Review, as fundamental to good commissioning. This means:

- Collaboration across strategic themes covered in the local authority or region, including Single Integrated Plan, Health Social Care and Well-being Strategy, Community Safety Strategy and Homelessness Strategy.
- Collaboration between local authorities, the NHS, service providers and people who use Supporting People services. RCCs should develop formal links and reporting arrangements with Regional Partnership Boards. Local authority Supporting People Teams must develop mechanisms through which people who use Supporting People services can be involved in the developing, commissioning and reviewing of support services.
- Regional and local commissioning arrangements are expected to use local Homelessness strategies as well as other data sources, such as population needs data, to consider whether there is an appropriate balance of preventative and reactive services in an area.
- Where low levels of need are identified local authorities should collaborate across boundaries to make the most effective use of resources, for example, services for young people with complex needs.
- Commissioning works best where there is a shared understanding of strategic priorities and a focus on prioritising the needs of the community, in addition to value for money. Local authorities and partners need to adopt a culture of continuous challenge to ensure services are procured and monitored to maximise the prevention of homelessness, including short and speedy interventions, where appropriate, to focus on specific problems, as well as building longer term resilience.

In the provision of public services, there are frequent opportunities to take advantage of ad hoc pots of money that have become available through one off funding initiatives or slippage from existing projects. With these opportunities in mind, it is essential that local authorities and RCCs maintain a register of services that may be commissioned or procured at short notice should funding become available. These may be new services requiring procurement or expansion of existing services. These plans may not have an established funding source and may not be fully mature, but they are available to be called upon if funding should become available at short notice.

4.9.6 The legislative framework for procurement

The procurement of social care and housing-related support services is governed by legislation that has been enacted in both Europe and the UK. 'Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities Commissioning Framework and Guidance 2010' supported by the Value Wales Procurement Route Planner provides guidance on procurement and copies of the relevant key legislation with which local authorities must comply in securing services. This Guidance is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice or to provide an exhaustive explanation of relevant legislation, and local authorities should seek further advice as appropriate.

4.9.7 Competitive tendering and re-tendering

The Public Contracts Regulations (2015) set out rules for certain service contracts. Where practicable, commissioning bodies may choose to make use of the 'Light Touch Regime' in order to take advantage of the increased flexibility it provides. There are, however, a number of conditions that need to be met.

4.9.8 Flexibilities

Local authorities have the flexibility to use any process or procedure they choose to run the procurement, as long as it respects legislative requirements outlined above.

4.9.9 Tendering and Re-Tendering

New services should be subject to normal procurement practice and regulation.

Existing services should be subject to a robust and regular strategic review every three years. It would not be anticipated that Supporting People services would be re-tendered on a routine basis. Re-tendering exercises will only take place following a strategic service review. Where a service contract is due to expire, and no strategic review has taken place in the previous twelve month then it is strongly recommended the service will need to be retendered.

This strategic review will have established whether a service is effective and meets local, regional and national policy objectives, is of low quality or did not reflect acceptable cost guidance and was not able to address identified shortcomings. In the first instance, remodelling should be considered as a means of reconfiguring services.

A Supporting People Planning Group may come to the conclusion that a contract requires re-tendering because services in their current form are not fit for purpose. This decision should firstly go to the RCC for review. Within the tender arrangements, there will be a need for a decision on the process for switching from an old to a new provider. Wherever there is a change of provider, arrangements must be in place to ensure both the providers and the local authority have a robust plan for transferring the service.

The continued operation of a range of local providers who have a track record of delivering good quality services which meet community needs is a consideration to ensure sector stability. Before deciding to re-tender a contract, Supporting People Planning Groups should consider the following key issues:

- The potential disruption that might be caused to people who use Supporting People services. Where complex services are being

provided, it is reasonable for this to be reflected in the duration of a contract.

- The outcome of consultation with key stakeholders, including people who use Supporting People services and any implications of re-tendering a contract in relation to related agreements, e.g. tenancy agreements.
- The cost and wider workforce implications of TUPE.
- The financial viability of the provider. A local authority should ensure that it liaises with those other local authorities in whose areas such providers are operating, so that they can identify any issues arising.
- Potential cost implications. Supporting People Planning Groups should balance the flexibilities afforded by regular re-tendering with the costs and administrative burdens associated with the process and the time needed for innovation and efficiency improvement under effective provider relationship development.
- Due weight should be placed on continuity of service provision, proven delivery and long-term provider commitment. This should be taken into consideration when evaluating the financial viability of instigating the re-procurement of a service.

A business case should be developed for the preferred option and key stakeholders should be consulted to ensure that it is sustainable and realistic in the long-term.

4.9.10 Strategic Review

It is important that a transparent and consistent approach to assessing strategic relevance is followed.

A strategic review will take into account the following considerations:

1. The service must be:
 - Contributing to local, regional and national strategic objectives.
 - Meeting the requirements and objectives of the service specification.
 - Achieving outcomes relevant to the Supporting People Programme.
2. The support needs of the client group must be eligible for Supporting People funding.
3. The service must provide housing related support and demonstrate that the support provided is enabling, and focussed on developing a person's independence and future resilience. i.e. 'doing with' as distinct from 'doing for'.
4. Evidence of the demand for the service.

4.9.11 Decommissioning Supporting People Services

RCCs and the local Supporting People Planning Groups will need to make difficult decisions in reconfiguring services to ensure they have the right balance of services to focus on homelessness prevention and address the changing funding environment. Strategic priorities along with efficiency savings will need to be considered and agreed to model for future reductions to the SPPG. Risk management strategies will need to be put in place to manage potential funding cuts along with comprehensive Equality Impact Assessments to manage the process and minimise the risk to those receiving services and to those delivering services.

Local authorities and RCCs need to make reductions strategically, with all stakeholders including but not limited to: Housing, Probation, Health, Social Services and service providers.

4.9.12 Reasons for De-commissioning

The de-commissioning of housing related support services funded through the SPPG must be undertaken as a result of a clear and transparent process that is well managed to minimise risk and which takes in to account the views of stakeholders.

Decommissioning Process:

Where the Supporting People Team has concluded that a service, funded through SPPG should be de-commissioned, the Supporting People Team will make a recommendation to the Local Supporting People Planning Group and to the RCC.

The proposal to de-commission a service should be submitted to the Local Supporting People Planning Group and the RCC to ensure that decisions to decommission receive fair consideration by the members.

Any proposal to decommission should be clearly evidenced. De-commissioning should only be approved following a strategic relevance assessment. An equalities impact assessment must be part of the decision making process to manage and minimise the risk to those receiving services. Where appropriate an exit strategy should be developed.

The final decision to de-commission a Supporting People funded service lies with the local authority.

4.9.13 Working with Support Providers and Stakeholders

The Supporting People Team should consider evidence from, and the views of, people who use Supporting People services.

4.9.14 Ending Contracts

Once a decision to de-commission has been approved, formal notice will follow contractual requirements. Where a support provider has given notice on a contract to the Supporting People Team this too will follow contractual requirements.

4.9.15 Informing People who use Supporting People Services and Stakeholders

Once the support provider has been given contract end notification, the Supporting People Team will work with the provider to notify people who use Supporting People services of the decision. This process must take account of the vulnerability and support needs of people who use Supporting People services which will inform a risk management plan.

4.9.16 Communication

The Supporting People Team should ensure that relevant stakeholders are involved as soon as strategic decisions have been made and are communicated with regularly and appropriately.

4.10 Charging for Supporting People services

4.10.1 Charging for Supporting People services is a decision for local authorities. The guidance below outlines which legislation local authorities might wish to use should they opt to charge for services. Local authorities should take into consideration the costs for collection against the income generated when charging for services. Local authorities must take their own legal advice in order to ensure that they are able to charge for Supporting People services.

4.10.2 Legislation

1. *Housing Act 1985 - Section 11A (Provision of Welfare Services)*

In summary, in relation to housing provided by the local authority, section 11A of the Housing Act 1985 provides that a local housing authority may provide welfare services for promoting the welfare of the persons for whom the accommodation is provided. The local authority may make reasonable charges for these welfare services. Welfare services do not include the repair, maintenance, supervision or management of houses or other property.

2. *Local Government Act 2000 - Sections 2 (Promotion of well-being) and 3 (Limits on power to promote well-being) and section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 (Power to charge for discretionary services)*

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides that every local authority in Wales are to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects - the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of their

area. Section 3 provides limits on a local authority on the power to promote well-being.

Statutory guidance has been issued by the Welsh Government recently on the exercise of these powers.

(<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/publications/statutory-guidance-ese-la-act-2000/?lang=en>).

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that a relevant authority may charge a person for providing a service [to that person], if the authority is authorised, but not required, by an enactment to provide the service, and [the person] has agreed to its provision.

4.11 Financial Management

4.11.1 This section provides detailed information on the roles of Supporting People teams, RCCs, Providers and the Welsh Government in management of the Supporting People Programme Grant. It is intended to assist in the efficient and sustainable delivery of high quality, housing-related services via the Supporting People Programme Grant.

4.11.2 This section does not cover all eventualities, but is a summary of the key stages involved in the financial administration of the Supporting People Programme.

4.11.3 Role of the Local Authority

Effective delivery and management of the Supporting People Programme will be the responsibility of local authorities through:

- Bringing forward realistic Supporting People services which help create independence and meet local as well as regional strategic needs and aims.
- Ensuring quality services are being delivered, provide value for money, reasonable full cost recovery based on the Welsh Government Third Sector Scheme¹ and comply with grant guidance and Terms and Conditions.
- Partnership with stakeholders developing robust local and regional strategies to identify needs and priorities.
- Managing the commissioning and procurement of services in accordance with relevant legal requirements, the Authorities' Contract Procurement Rules and having regard to *the Commissioning and Procurement* section of this Guidance and any other relevant guidance.

¹ http://www.wcva.org.uk/media/818409/final_third_sector_scheme_2014.pdf

- Prioritising schemes on the basis of established and transparent criteria, including carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on all funding decisions.
- Provide an Annual Update detailing an overview of recommendations for commissioning, remodeling and decommissioning for the following financial year in line with the Regional Strategic Plans.
- Selection of service providers for schemes based on transparent criteria and monitoring service delivery costs.
- Management of the outturns for the Programme.
- Local authorities need to complete the Welsh Government Audit Certificate in accordance with the Grant Terms and Conditions for that financial year.
- Preparation of a Spend Plan for submission to the RCC.
- Managing any slippage/variance in the Supporting People Programme Grant if under 10% of spend category/client group budget.
- Seeking the approval of the RCC for variances above 10% of the spend category budget or virements between local authorities.
- Agreement of appropriate performance monitoring measures with the Welsh Government.
- Ensuring that all documentation relating to the Supporting People Programme Grant funded schemes is available for the Welsh Government if required.
- Ensuring the regional Spend Plan within the Regional Strategic Plan reflects levels of need within the local and regional area.
- Ensuring Outcomes data is collected and submitted to the Welsh Government in the prescribed format by 31 August and 28 February annually.
- Using the Outcomes data to inform commissioning decisions.
- Submitting the Audit Certificate by 30 September each year, certifying the expenditure and outcomes information has been appropriately validated.
- Ensuring providers have appropriate disclaimers in place to enable client information to be available for research and evaluation purposes.

- Regularly reviewing and monitoring all housing related support contracts to ensure compliance with the Supporting People Programme Grant terms and conditions, using a risk based approach. Reviewing should happen every 3 years and monitoring at least annually.
- Local authorities are encouraged to develop an ongoing dialogue with service providers in relation to claw back and consider all factors that have led to any shortfall in service delivery and/or voids. This may well mean that the local authority agrees to waive clawback, where reasonable justification is given and accepted.
- Void Clawback – management of voids is the responsibility of the local authority through contract monitoring and evaluation processes. Local authorities are empowered to clawback monies where voids have exceeded 10% if there is **no reasonable explanation** for the voids.

A good practice example of this is the **North Wales Clawback Statement**, which states:

Financial Clawback

All funding / grant under the terms of this contract will be monitored at regular performance reviews.

The local authority may seek to recover any funding / grant from providers for the following reasons, unless reasonable justification is given and agreed:

- 1. Voids over 10% - Number of units of support not delivered*
- 2. Staff Hours not delivered*

Where a potential clawback has been identified this will be calculated at the end of each quarter following receipt of the performance monitoring returns; any clawback will not be applied until the end of Quarter 4 to allow for improved performance.

Recovery will be from future payments or by invoice if the contract has expired and no future payments are due.

4.11.4 The Role of the Coordinating Local Authority

Please refer to Chapter 3 '*Running the Programme*', section 3.9 for guidance.

4.11.5 The Role of Regional Collaborative Committees

Please refer to Chapter 3 '*Running the Programme*', section 3.8 for guidance.

4.11.6 Role of the Provider

The Provider will:

- Develop and deliver services which help create independence.
- Where appropriate, sign post and link into other services, eg education, employment and training opportunities.
- Demonstrate financial competence and compliance with all relevant financial regulations and requirements.
- Ensure quality services and value for money.
- Provide information on costings and income for the project.
- Work in partnership with the local authority and RCC.
- Advise the local authority where void levels reach 10%.
- Advise the local authority where surpluses are made on contracts.
- Address contract issues in the first instance to local authorities and then RCCs via the Regional Provider Forum.
- Advise local authorities where a gap in service has been identified and then RCCs via the Regional Provider Forum.

4.11.7 Role of the Welsh Government

The role of the Welsh Government includes:

- Receive plans submitted by local authorities and RCCs, for consideration.
- Manage the escalation of issues that cannot be resolved by collaboration between the local and regional levels to the Cabinet Secretary, via the Supporting People National Advisory Board, for further examination.
- Provide indicative budget allocations, subject to appropriate caveats.
- Allocate Supporting People Programme Grant resources to local authorities taking into account Regional Strategic Plans. The Welsh Government reserves the right to review allocations to individual local authorities.
- Administer the payment of grant to local authorities.
- Monitor and evaluate the Supporting People Programme Grant.
- Review the use of the grant usage by local authorities and providers on an ad-hoc basis.
- Carry out sample checks on project applications and grant payments and where appropriate claw back grant if there is non-compliance with Supporting People Programme Grant terms and conditions which cannot be remedied.

4.11.8 Supporting People Programme Grant Budget

The Welsh Government publishes its overall final budget in January of each year. This will include the amount of Supporting People Programme Grant.

4.11.9 Allocations

The Welsh Government will allocate the Supporting People Programme Grant with reference to Regional Strategic Plans by spend category.

Letters notifying indicative Supporting People Programme Grant allocations for the forthcoming financial year will be issued to local authorities each December.

Following the approval of the Welsh Government budgets in January/February, each local authority will receive a Supporting People Programme Grant offer letter in March of each year for commencement of the grant in April.

The offer will take the form of a Grant Award for the financial year which begins in the following April.

4.11.10 Supporting People Programme Grant Spend Plans, Monitoring and Grant Process

The Spend Plan proforma specifies the local Supporting People Programme Grant spending intentions for the year. Local authorities will submit their Spend Plans with their Annual Updates for consideration by the RCC, who in turn will submit it, as a part of the collated Regional Spend Plan and Annual Update which show how they are delivering against the Regional Strategic Plan, to the Welsh Government for consideration and allocation of grant. Where any issues cannot be resolved by collaboration between the local and regional levels, they will be escalated to Cabinet Secretary, via the Supporting People National Advisory Board, for further examination.

It is recognised that programmes are fluid and will be subject to change. Local authorities should submit bi-annual outturn statements (in July and January) against their Spend Plans to the RCC and Welsh Government. Where any issues cannot be resolved by collaboration between the local and regional levels, they will be escalated to Cabinet Secretary, via the Supporting People National Advisory Board, for further examination.

The Welsh Government will consider the regional Spend Plans. The performance of the RCCs and local authorities will be judged according to the extent to which schemes are delivered according to the agreed plans.

Any material changes to a service which represent a change of greater than 10% of the total for a spend category in the Spend Plan must be notified by the local authority to the RCC for consideration. If the RCC does not approve, they will provide advice to Welsh Government, who will consider for approval. This is a condition of the grant and failure to observe this will result in the local authority being in breach of the grant conditions.

It is accepted that in the case of services yet to be commissioned, the amounts of spend shown against individual spend category in the Regional Strategic Plan may be indicative only.

The RCC will advise the Welsh Government of outturn expenditure at the end of the financial year. Local authorities will submit their final outturn expenditure statement by the end of April to the RCC for approval prior to submission to Welsh Government. Expenditure monitoring throughout the year will be an integral component of the local authority and RCC's programme management role.

Local authorities will be able to exercise the necessary programme management control through the selection of Supporting People services that balance regional and local priorities, needs and deliverability. Services need to be within the context of the agreed Spend Plan approved by Welsh Government – with local authorities having the ability to move funding between client groups at up to 10% of each client group budget.

Where there is a need to undertake virement of funding within region but across local authorities, then the proposal must be agreed by the local authorities. The RCC will submit their recommendations to the Welsh Government for consideration and approval.

4.11.11 Management Charges

Management charges should be as low as possible, consistent with maintaining sustainable services. They should also be based on actual costs as far as can be reasonably ascertained and calculated. Management charges should not be greater than 10% of the grant to a provider. However, the cap should operate on the principle of 'comply or explain'. Where providers exceed the cap they will be required to provide full information breakdowns of relevant expenditure with associated explanations of why they amount to an overall level higher than the cap, and the actions they have taken to reduce expenditure.

Welsh Government commissioned research into management charges and a full copy of the report can be found at:

<http://gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2015/151019-supporting-people-programme-managment-charges-en.pdf>

In their budget and financial reporting all providers and local authorities should distinguish between:

- Front line delivery costs (mainly consisting of relevant salary costs but potentially involving other costs as well depending on the project).
- Overhead costs associated directly with delivery ('other running costs' including items such as printing, transport, travel and subsistence, training of front line staff, etc).

- Indirect and central overhead costs (management charges).

Management charges usually cover the costs (or portion of the costs) associated with central operation/organisation of the Provider which are necessary for the provision of the service (corporate costs). These may include a fair proportion of:

- Central management and governance costs, including direct and indirect overhead such as training and support services.
- Back office support services such as HR, Finance, Legal and Communications.
- Depending on the provider and project elements such as procurement, facilities, audit, IT, insurance, quality control and assurance, publicity and marketing, policy development and public affairs, health and safety and administration and records.

4.11.12 Compliance

Welsh Government will monitor local authority compliance via the grant terms and conditions and the Annual Audit Certificate. Local authorities should ensure they have the necessary checks and controls in place to ensure Provider compliance.

Chapter 5: Evidencing the Impact of the Programme

5.1 Research and Evaluation

- 5.1.1 Effective monitoring and evaluation is part of good programme design, commissioning and learning.
- 5.1.2 Ensuring effective evaluation and a robust outcomes system are essential parts of proving the impact of the Supporting People Programme, given that public finances continue to be under pressure.
- 5.1.3 The Supporting People National Advisory Board (SPNAB) has delegated the research and evaluation framework to the Research and Evaluation Steering Group. All Supporting People stakeholders are expected to engage with any ongoing piece of research and evaluation work currently being undertaken.

5.2 Research and Evaluation Steering Group

5.2.1 The group will:

- Assist in developing the aims and objectives of the research/evaluation(s).
- Assist in developing robust and credible evaluation processes, by providing advice on the appropriateness of the suggested approaches from the perspective of the various organisations/sectors involved in the group.
- Monitor the evaluation, from inception to completion, ensuring that milestones are met on time.
- Raise the profile of the evaluation(s) and champion engagement in own organisation/sector.
- Act as conduit between the Steering Group and the various related Supporting People groups (SPNAB, the Supporting People Information Network (SPIN), the Supporting People Outcome and Data Group (SPODG)).
- Agree key messages and how these can be regularly communicated to the wider Supporting People community.

- 5.2.2 All research will be discussed and taken forward as appropriate, subject to funding being made available.

5.3 Outcomes

- 5.3.1 The Supporting People Outcome Framework was implemented in March 2012. Since that time there have been minor changes made to the framework and data has been collected which has helped to strengthen the evidence base of the programme. However, it is also acknowledged that there needs to be changes to the current framework to ensure they are relevant and fit for purpose. To assist with this work the Supporting People Outcome and Data Group was set up to develop a new framework. This

framework will be a separate element of the Supporting People Programme Guidance consultation exercise and, therefore, will be completed after the consultation has been undertaken.

Supporting People Programme Guidance Questions

- 1. Is the draft Guidance appropriately person centred and is the eligibility criteria clear? Please give a reason for your response.**

Yes	
No	

--

- 2 Does the draft Guidance have a positive impact on equality across service development and commissioning? If not, why not?**

Yes	
No	

--

- 3 Does the draft Guidance provide a clear commissioning framework for Supporting People commissioners and service providers? Please give a reason for your response.**

Yes	
No	

--

- 4 Is the draft Guidance flexible enough to encourage innovation and make the most effective use of the Supporting People budget? Please give a reason for your response.**

Yes	
No	

--

- 5 Do you agree that the draft Guidance strengthens the governance arrangements of Regional Collaborative Committees (eg Regional Partnership Boards)? If not, please explain why?**

Yes	
No	

--

- 6 Is the connection between Supporting People commissioning and Welsh Government legislation clear? Please give a reason for your response.**

Yes	
No	

--

- 7 Is the role of stakeholders clear? If not, why not?**

Yes	
No	

--

- 8 Are there sections of the draft Guidance that could be strengthened or made easier to use? Please give a reason for your response.**

Yes	
No	

--

9 Do you have any other comments on the draft guidance?

--



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

Consultation of the further development of the
Outcomes Framework

Outcomes – background and purpose of consultation

Purpose of the consultation

1. Important improvements have been made to the outcomes framework in recent years which have improved the quality of data on what the Supporting People programme does for the people who receive support. The further development of the outcomes framework has been discussed at length as well and the Supporting People Information Network, working with Cymorth Cymru, suggested changes to the Framework to make the outcomes more relevant, to cut down the number being collected and to reduce the time taken to report the outcomes.

2. The Supporting People Outcome and Data Group was set up in response to this request, and includes Welsh Government Officials, providers, local authorities and data experts. In 2015-16, changes were made to the existing Framework to enable evidence of the links between the Supporting People Programme and homelessness. It is proposed further changes are made to the Framework to strengthen alignment with the Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 goals, and with other Communities and Tackling Poverty programmes.

What are the main issues with the current collection?

Returning the data to the Welsh Government

3. The current Framework has provided a substantial increase in evidence on the impact of the Programme. However, the collection methodology has had a number of issues including;

- concerns around data protection and the quality management and governance of data
- variances across Wales in understanding of the step progression¹ process and how to evidence this
- missing or inaccurately recorded information (such as outcomes being given when it was not marked as relevant for a client)
- lower levels of returns of outcomes for some client groups
- potential for duplication of counting.

4. Current requirements for local authorities to collect and verify the information are reported to be time consuming. Data collection tools do not fully prevent errors in data entry and there are also differences across Wales in terms of understanding the terminology used within the outcomes.

5. The improved data has enabled us to better understand what support is being delivered to which 'client categories' (see Appendix 1) and how well people are progressing while they are being supported.

Unique References

6. When the Framework was developed, the use of a 'unique identifier' was required. This is the first 3 letters of a client's surname, their data of birth and M or F for male or female. It was noted this was not always unique and potentially could breach data protection when returned to the Welsh Government. This was one of the key reasons for the collection being paused prior to 2014.

7. Subsequently, there has been further discussion and there is an alternative suggestion of using the National Insurance number which is both a unique identifier and, in isolation of other data, carries less risk in terms of any data protection concerns. The National Insurance number is also used in other parts of both the Welsh Government and other UK Government departments. It is understood that some 16 year olds may not have a National Insurance Number at the point of support starting.

8. It is also understood that people will need to be asked if their personal details, such as the National Insurance Number, can be used. With this in mind, it is now a mandatory part of the local authority contracts that they will ensure appropriate disclaimers are used by providers to ensure people are aware their information may be used, usually anonymously, for data research and analysis purposes as well as helping to shape and improve services.

What are we proposing to change?

9. It is proposed to strengthen the focus of outcomes on the aims of the Programme to reduce the number of outcomes and provide clear definitions and guidance.

10. A person-centred focus is proposed, whilst still being able to report meaningful key information to the Welsh Government.

11. It is proposed that the number of outcomes reduce from 11 to 7. These will be focused on the most relevant outcomes from the data currently collected, but also those which link to the aims of the Programme, preventing homelessness and Government priorities. The proposed outcome framework is shown below. It should be noted that the list of client aspirations suggested below is not intended to be exhaustive and there are other things which may be more important to the individual.

12. It is further proposed that evidence of clients meeting their ambitions will be captured through the support planning and review stage and will rely heavily on self reporting by the client. The role of the support worker and the skill of that worker will be important to ensure issues are correctly identified and recorded.

Table 1 Proposed Outcome Framework

Proposed Outcome Indicators	Client Aspiration and or perceptions	LA reporting to WG
People feel safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel safe • I have positive relationships with friends and family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of those supported who feel safe
People are able to manage their money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know how to pay/I am paying my bills • I am not worried about how I will pay my bills or debts I'm in control of my bills and debts • I am in control of my budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of clients supported whose finance situation has stabilised and/or improved
<p>People have accommodation and are able to manage it</p> <p>People who are not at imminent risk of homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have accommodation which meets my needs and which is likely to last 6 months or more • I am able to manage my accommodation • I am in accommodation which is temporary and likely to last less than 6 months whilst I receive support to help me look for a more permanent home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of people who have suitable accommodation which is likely to last at least 6 months • Number of people who are under a S66 duty • Number of people who are S73 homeless • Number and/or % of people who are receiving support in short term temp accommodation likely to last under 6 months
People are engaged in education and/or learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am studying for a qualification which will be at level 2 • I am undertaking learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people who are engaged in education and/or learning to a level 2 level or above * • Number of people who have been supported to access a learning activity which may include basic skills training but which is below a level 2
Engaged in Employment/voluntary work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am working or volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of people who have entered employment • Number and/or % of people who are volunteering
Physically Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am actively trying to manage my physical health • I have my physical health condition under control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of people who receive help to manage their physical health condition
Mentally Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel positive and able to deal with day to day worries • I feel I can cope with day to day worries and concerns shocks, stresses and uncertainty • I know where to go to get help if I feel I need it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and/or % of people with improved emotional/mental well being

Level 2 education can include the following GCSEs (grades A-C): O Levels (grades A-C), CSEs (grade 1), Award, Certificate, Diploma (City & Guilds, CACHE, OCR, BTEC/Edexcel/Pearson), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), NVQ Level 2, National Certificate/Diploma, Intermediate apprenticeship, Functional Skills Essential Skills, Music (grades 4-5).

13. People will only be expected to select outcomes which are relevant for them.

14. To ensure the outcomes are meaningful, it is proposed to collect the starting point i.e. are you in paid employment, is that part time or full time, are you doing voluntary work, are you currently engaged in education or learning, what is your current housing situation? Whilst these are things that may be routinely collected by some providers and local authorities, they have not previously been submitted to the Welsh Government and it would enable a better understanding of the baseline for outcomes being selected as relevant for the individual and will ultimately make the outcome results more meaningful.

15. It is further proposed to introduce a 3 step process to replace the current 5 step process which will also be meaningful to the client. This could be 'I would like to work towards' x (thereby showing the outcome is currently relevant for the individual), 'I am working towards' (this would show an individual has started working toward achieving their relevant outcomes), and 'I have achieved' (which would make the outcome no longer relevant for the next period). Not all aspirations will be achieved and the relevance of them may change throughout the period of support.

Equalities

16. The Welsh Government currently holds limited data around the way in which this Programme identifies and addresses areas of inequality. However, as part of the Grant Terms and Conditions the local authorities are required to undertake equality impact assessments, "Prioritising schemes on the basis of established and transparent criteria including carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on how Supporting People Programme Grant is allocated" (as taken from the Supporting People Programme Guidance 2012).

17. It is proposed that basic equalities information should be collected which includes the protected characteristics below:

- Age
- Date of birth
- Disability
- Gender reassignment (the process of transferring from one gender to another)
- Marriage and civil partnership (including same sex partnerships and marriages)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (colour, nationality)
- Religion and believe (& non belief)
- Sex (man or a woman)

- Sexual orientation

18. This information would be returned to the Welsh Government in an aggregated format to enable the Welsh Government to monitor the Programme in relation to equality requirements.

Collection of three levels of data

19. There are currently 19 client categories (see Appendix 1) and it is proposed that we continue to collect information around the three primary client categories/areas of support, with the support most relevant to the (e.g. Mental Health) being shown as a lead need, and subsequent support needs to be shown as secondary and tertiary needs. This will enable the range of support needed by an individual to be more fully understood. This will also focus on the needs of the individual, and not the service they have been referred to.

Long and short term services

20. The current collection makes no distinction between short and long term services and the outcomes associated with these services. It also doesn't have a way of collecting evidence around people who may have very short term services but little outcome information is recorded for them.

21. For very short term services, less than a month, where there has been little opportunity to collect outcomes, and potentially where there has been a focus on helping people through signposting to relevant support elsewhere, it is proposed there will be a simple question of *'how many people were seen 'on demand', for a period of less than 1 month, and where there were no outcomes recorded?'*. This will enable a clearer understanding of the numbers of people who approach the services that may not need the full level of support potentially available to them, or can be helped over a very short period of time.

22. In services which are likely to last over 2 years, we now know that 6 monthly reviews are not taking place on a 6 month basis. Whilst this is not in line with the requirements of the Outcomes Framework there is likely to be little change from one period to the next in the outcomes information collected and/or reported. This is particularly true for people with a learning disability and older people. It is not clear if, in all cases, it would be known if the support is likely to last over 2 years, and as such the outcomes at the initial point of support may be different than would be required longer term. However, once it is clear that support is likely to be of a long term, or almost permanent, duration, are outcomes required every 6 months and are

23. the outcomes relevant for the people receiving the service? This is particularly relevant to those people in sheltered accommodation.

Fixed/floating support

24. We currently collect data based on the locality support being provided i.e. fixed or floating support. It is thought that fixed support is generally more reactive, supporting people once they have had a 'crisis point', although not in all cases. Floating support tends to be more preventative in nature, and is in line with the aims of the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 and the Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

25. The information is currently valuable in helping to see how support being provided is changing in response to budget changes and new legislation. However, is 'fixed' and 'floating' support still the best terminology to describe these ways of delivering services in a way which can be more easily understood by people outside the programme and outside the field of housing?. Should there be more focus on 'preventative' and 'reactive'?

New Database

26. It is proposed a database, which is commonly used across Wales, would be beneficial in helping to cut down on the numbers of errors with the data recording. It will also help to speed up validation and, in principle, be able to provide a snapshot of people accessing services at any one time. However, whilst there is general agreement that a database would be of use, it is not clear how this could be funded. It has been suggested the Welsh Government could consider funding the development of the site and the annual running costs could be funded through the local authorities. The justification for this being the amount of time a database would save collecting and verifying outcomes would be substantially reduced, leaving staff time for other Programme based work.

27. However, should a database be developed it would need to be used consistently across the whole of Wales. This will also mean that appropriate IT solutions must be found to enable it to be used effectively by local authorities and providers.

28. The use of a database would, in principle, mean we are able to reduce the number of client categories currently in use as we would already have information, such as a person's age, and can ensure we have information about why they need support.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE OUTCOMES CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

What are we proposing to change?

1. Do you agree the proposed outcomes and client aspirations are the right ones (Table 1 Proposed Outcome Framework)?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

2. Do you agree with the proposed baseline information, e.g. I have a job, I am in learning/education, my accommodation is likely to be stable for at least 6 months (with support)? Is there other baseline information which should be collected (Paragraph 14)?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

3. To what extent do you agree that people accessing the services should self report their outcome success to providers which can be captured at review (Paragraph 12)?

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree nor disagree
Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give a reason for your response.

Unique References

- 4. Do you agree with the use of the National Insurance number as the unique identifier (Paragraph 6-8)?**

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response including an alternative unique identifier suggestion if you disagree.

Equalities

- 5. To what extent do you agree that there needs to be an increased use of equalities information to ensure equality of opportunity and to help shape its future direction (Paragraph 16 – 18)?**

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please give a reason for your response.

Collection of three levels of data

- 6. To what extent do you agree it is still appropriate to collect lead, secondary and tertiary needs (Paragraph 19)?**

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give a reason for your response.

Long and Short term services

- 7. To what extent do you agree it is appropriate to start collecting evidence of people who are provided with very short term services of less than a month (Paragraph 21)?**

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neither Agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

7a If so do you agree the question proposed is correct? *how many people were seen 'on demand', for a period of less than 1 month, and where there were no outcomes recorded?*

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

8. Are the outcome measures proposed appropriate for people in long term supported accommodation (Paragraph 22)?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response. If you feel these outcome measures are not appropriate, can you outline why and what could be an alternative proposal?

9. What is a suitable outcome for long term services, could it be “*the support I receive helps me to remain in my own home*” – the number and/or % of people in supported accommodation who receive support to help them remain in their own home?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

10.Do you have any other comments on outcomes for long term services?

Fixed/floating support

11.Should the terms fixed and floating support be changed to reactive and preventative respectively (Paragraph 23 – 24)?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

Data Collection Tool

12.Do you feel it would be of benefit to have an all Wales database (Paragraph 25 - 27)?

Yes	
No	

Please give a reason for your response.

12a If yes, is your organisation prepared to make necessary IT changes to enable that to happen? Is your organisation prepared to fund the annual cost of running that database?

Yes	
No	

13. Is there anything else about this consultation you would like to comment on?

Appendix One

1. Alarm Services (including in Sheltered/extra Care)
2. Families with Support Needs
3. Generic Floating Support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)
4. Men Experiencing Domestic Abuse
5. People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services)
6. People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)
7. People with Criminal Offending History
8. People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)
9. People with Learning Disabilities
10. People with Mental Health Issues
11. People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities
12. People with Refugee Status
13. People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)
14. People with Substance Misuse Issues (Drugs and Volatile substances)
15. Single Parent Families with Support Needs
16. Single People with Support Needs
17. Women Experiencing Domestic Abuse
18. Young People who are Care Leavers
19. Young People with Support Needs (16-24)

Insert heading relating to the questions

Consultation Response Form

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

email / telephone number:

Your address:

Question XX: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Please enter here:

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:

☐